

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for customizing a computer system, comprising the steps of:

5 receiving a customer order, wherein the customer order specifies customization information for a computer system;

10 sending a computer system to the customer, the computer system including a network port through which configuration parameters corresponding to the customization information specified in the customer order can be received, and a configuration mechanism for storing the configuration parameters received via the network port, the computer system being adapted to customize the computer system according to the configuration parameters stored in the configuration mechanism;

15 providing instructions to the customer to connect the network port of the computer system to a network; and

transmitting the customization parameters over the network and to the network port of the computer system for storage in the configuration mechanism.

20 2. The method of customizing a computer system of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing instructions to the customer to initiate a boot process;

25 wherein, in response to the initiation of a boot process, the computer system customizes an operating system according to the configuration parameters stored in the configuration mechanism.

3. The method of customizing a computer system of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing instructions to the customer to initiate a boot process;

5 wherein, the computer system includes a data storage device having a first partition including a first operating system, and a second partition including a second operating system and, in response to the initiation of the boot process, the computer system first boots to the second partition to execute the second operating system which causes the first operating system in the first partition to be customized according to the configuration
10 parameters stored in the configuration mechanism and, upon completion of the customization of the first operating system, the computer system boots to the first partition and executes the first operating system.

15 4. A method for customizing a computer system comprising:

(a) providing a configuration mechanism in the computer system;

(b) transmitting customization information for the computer system to the configuration mechanism; and

(c) retrieving the customization information in the configuration mechanism by the
20 computer system to customize the computer system.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the configuration mechanism is a PCI adapter.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the providing step (a) includes plugging the
25 configuration mechanism into the computer system such that the computer system accesses the configuration mechanism.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the configuration mechanism includes at least one communication port.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the transmitting step (b) includes:

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- (b1) detecting by a server that the computer system is connected to a network; and
 - (b2) downloading the customization information from the server to the configuration mechanism via the at least one communication port.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one communication port is an Ethernet
10 port connected to a LAN.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the server is connected to the LAN.

11. The method of claim 4, wherein the retrieving step (c) includes:

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- (c1) performing a first system boot; and
 - (c2) querying the configuration mechanism for the customization information.

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